

6 Fugitive Architecture

6.1 The Final Decade

A notebook of drawings presented to Ottoboni in 1733 (Figure 6.1) can be considered in the context of the Lateran competition (see Appendix, doc. 9). It was assembled by Filippo Cesari, a little known pupil of Juvarra.²⁸³ Dated 1733, the portfolio of almost 100 designs could not have been a factor in the façade competition, but possibly Cesari was interested in a position in the cardinal's court like that held earlier in the century by his master Juvarra, especially as Ottoboni's trusted architect, Pellegrini, had died the year before, and Michetti had not entered the palace rolls. Ottoboni would continue to need *machine* and theater sets, and he planned major renovations for San Lorenzo. In the same context, Sassi's involvement with the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament may have been intended to ease his entry into the court.

Among the studies in Cesari's notebook are more than seventy architectural renderings of the five classical orders modeled on Vignola, but embellished throughout with the Ottoboni family devices of double-headed eagles, star bursts and armor (Figure 6.2). There is a splendid title page containing measuring devices, Roman monuments, symbols of the cardinal virtues, Ottoboni arms, and the paired keys and tiara of the papacy (Figure 6.3). Here Cesari followed the practice of Vignola himself, who in his *Regola delli Cinque ordini* published in 1562, had included in metopes of his entablatures symbols of his patron's family arms. Vignola's patron, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, had also been Vice-Chancellor and resident of the Cancelleria.

²⁸³ The sketchbook is preserved in the Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe, Rome, F.C. 126696-F.C. 126766bis. The notebook has been exhibited by Kieven, E. (1988). *Ferdinando Fuga e l'architettura Romana del Settecento* (pp. 87-91, 205-220, figs. 103, f.2-f.99). Rome: Multigrafica Editrice. The book may have entered the Biblioteca Corsiniana with the sale of Ottoboni books after 1740. For more on Cesari, see Oechslin, W. (1980). Cesari, Filippo, *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (vol. 24, pp. 159-161).

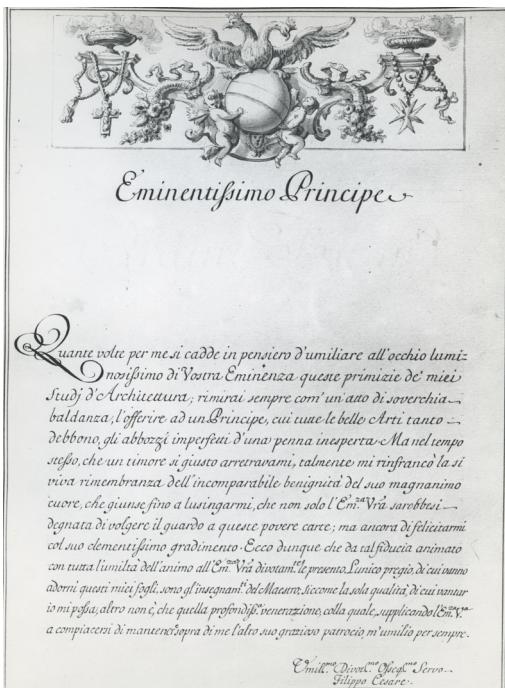


Figure 6.1: Filippo Cesari, *Dedication Page*, 1733, drawing, GNS, Rome.

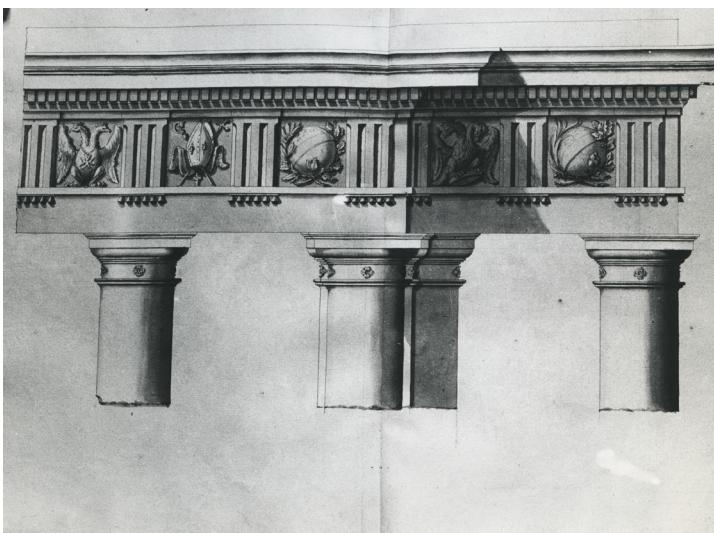


Figure 6.2: Filippo Cesari, *Entablature*, 1733, drawing, GNS, Rome.



Figure 6.3: Filippo Cesari, *Title Page*, 1733, drawing, GNS, Rome.

The dedication of Cesari's notebook establishes its basis in the works of Vignola:

STUDIO
D'ARCHITETTURA
SOPRA LE REGOLE
DEL' VIGNOLA
E DEDICATE
ALL EMIN.Emo REV.mo
PRINCIPI
IL SIG.re CARDINALE
OTTOBONI
DISEGNIALE
DA FILIPPO CESARI
IN
TORINO MDCCXXXIII.

Its basis in Vignola's orders hinted at the pedagogy of Juvarra with influences from Andrea Pozzo who was Juvarra's model when he taught perspective at the Academy of St. Luke during his residency in Ottoboni's court.²⁸⁴ He had been an instructor at the Academy in 1707-1708 and 1711-1712.²⁸⁵ Cesari may have accompanied his master to Rome where he remained after Juvarra had departed in August, 1732. It has been suggested that the studies may have been associated with one of the competitions for the Concorso Clementino in the early 1730s, although Cesari's name does not appear among the prize winners during these years.²⁸⁶

A separate page, folded almost as a careless inclusion, is a design for a catafalque (Figure 6.4) perhaps as a reminder to the 67 year old cardinal of his mortality. Its base with slanting corners and paired pilasters flanking a convex center is similar in profile to the base of the Ottoboni tomb in the Vatican, but also reflects the influence of Borromini in its departure from planarity. Obelisks on the flanks of the base support personifications of virtues, and a trumpeting angel stands on the apex of a dome supported by eight columns of the composite order (no doubt intended as a symbolic play on the family name, Ottoboni, or "eight goods." Alexander played with the Pythagorean symbolism of the number eight which was associated with egalitarian justice, and the eighth day of Creation). A half plan of the symmetrical construction is drawn below, and written above it in ink an inscription proclaimed its antique flavor: "Picciolo bozo di mia invenzione d'un Funerale sul gusto Antico."

The notebook clearly was intended to flatter its recipient. The papal arms on the title page were a reference to Ottoboni's great-uncle, but could also have hinted at the cardinal's prospects for the Chair of Peter. The sequence of bishoprics awarded Ottoboni after he took Holy Orders followed steps usually leading to the papacy. While many considered the temperamental Vice-Chancellor ill suited to the papacy, Charles de Brosses wrote of him later in the decade as one of the *papabili*. The same entry also described the cardinal as feeble. The catafalque included almost as an afterthought covered another possibility.

²⁸⁴ Millon, 1984, p. xxiii.

²⁸⁵ Millon, 1984, p. xii.

²⁸⁶ Kieven, p. 87.

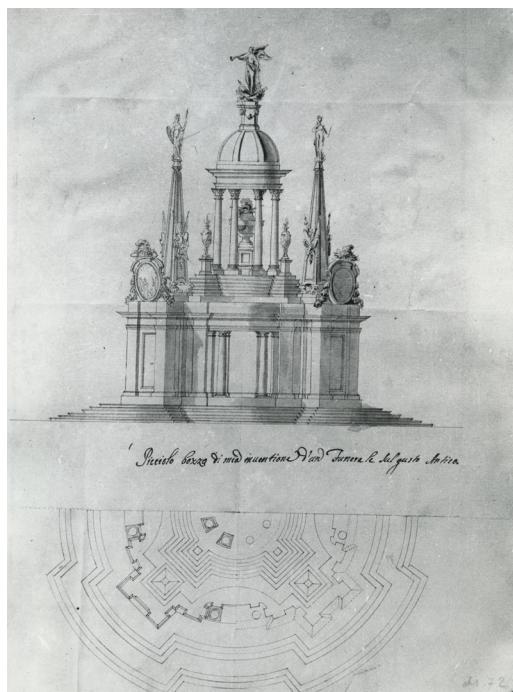


Figure 6.4: Filippo Cesari, *Catafalque*, 1733, drawing, GNS, Rome.

6.2 Domenico Gregorini

Domenico Gregorini (c. 1690/1695-1777) entered Ottoboni's court in mid-year 1736.²⁸⁷ It has been stated that he became Ottoboni's architect in the early 1720s, but it is not clear in what capacity.²⁸⁸ Chracas referred to him as Ottoboni's architect as early as 1727, but it was probably in the context of his work on the chapel at Santa Maria in Via where Ottoboni was protector of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament, or in a representative capacity to the monks of the Fabrica to whom Gregorini had presented

287 Gregorini is first enrolled under "Diversi" in June 1736 as "Cav. Domenico Gregorini Architetto di s(ua) E(minenza)," BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 96, "Rollo di Famiglia," nos. 8-12, June-December, 1736. He remained in the family rolls until the cardinal's death in 1740; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 73, no. 4, "Rollo di Famiglia," February 1740. Kelly errs in her claim that Gregorini "appeared as a member of the cardinal's household, without remuneration, only in June 1736;" p. 215. For more on Gregorini, see Mallory, N., "Domenico Gregorini," *MEA*, II, pp. 246-247; Varagnoli, C. (1989). *Notizie sull'attività di Domenico Gregorini dall'archivio Aldrovandi di Bologna*. In E. Debenedetti (Ed.), *L'architettura da Clemente XI a Benedetto XIV* (pp. 131-156). Rome: Multigrafica Editrice.

288 Mallory, *MEA*, II, p. 246. Kelly mentions three possible early projects to link Gregorini and Ottoboni; p. 230.

drawings and a *modello*.²⁸⁹ Gregorini had been a student in the Accademia di San Luca in 1707-1713 during the period when Juvarra taught there, and like Juvarra, had taken first prize in the Concorso Clementino conducted by the Academy under the sponsorship of Clement XI in 1713.²⁹⁰

A fireworks *machina* which Gregorini erected on the piazza della Cancelleria, presumably for Ottoboni, was recorded in an engraving (Figure 6.5).²⁹¹ Although a date of 1721 has been mentioned for the celebration, no documentation has surfaced to establish when the event took place. Gregorini has also been suggested as the architect whom Ottoboni sent to Sabina in 1726 to enlarge the palace of his new bishopric and renovate the town's public fountain.²⁹² As no name is mentioned in the report, Pellegrini or Sassi could as readily have been the referred to architect.²⁹³ Gregorini is acknowledged as responsible for the restoration of the church and convent of Santa Maria in Monterone of which Ottoboni was protector, but little work was carried out before 1736.²⁹⁴ His major effort for Ottoboni dates from the mid-1730s. In early 1734, Gregorini decorated a hall in the Ottoboni palace, at the same time as he had begun to remodel the Tor di Nona.²⁹⁵ He gave the theater a new hall with four or five tiers of 28 loges in the form of a shallow horseshoe.²⁹⁶ Gregorini's experience with theater construction would have drawn Ottoboni's interest, and it is shortly after this that the Vice-Chancellor gave him a monthly stipend and residency in his palace.

Gregorini first entered the court rolls under "Diversi" as "Cav. Domenico Gregorini Architetto da S[ua] E[minenza]." He remained on the family lists until Ottoboni's death in February, 1740.²⁹⁷ Gregorini may have met the cardinal during his instruction with Juvarra, but certainly when Ottoboni donated a picture of *The Holy Family* by Trevisani to the new Oratory at Santa Maria in Via. Gregorini had designed the altar for the painting which was presented to the Confraternity in late 1731.²⁹⁸ He later submitted his entry for the Lateran façade competition.

²⁸⁹ Chracas, vol. 41, no. 1501, pp. 10-12, 20, March 22, 1727.

²⁹⁰ Millon, 1984, p. xxii.

²⁹¹ The engraving of the *macchina di fuoco artificiale* in the Museo di Roma has been dated by Muñoz to 1721 but without explanation; *Il Museo di Roma*, Rome: 1930, Pl. 64.

²⁹² Reported in Chracas, vol. 38, no. 1388, p. 11, June 29, 1726.

²⁹³ Ayala, N. (1965). *Roman Rococo Architecture from Clement XI to Benedict XIV (1700-1758)* (p. 151). Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University.

²⁹⁴ Chracas, vol. 46, no. 1696, pp. 9-12, June 19, 1728.

²⁹⁵ Chracas, vol. 71, no. 2562, p. 9, January 2, 1734.

²⁹⁶ Chracas, vol. 71, no. 2585, pp. 2-3, February 20, 1734. See Cametti, I, p. 128, fig. 11 for a design of the plan. The curved horseshoe plan for 1671 had 21 boxes, that for 1696 had been an oval horseshoe with 35 boxes; Cametti, I, p. 88, fig. 6 and p. 91, fig 8. By comparison, the plan of the Teatro Alibert in 1766 was an oval horseshoe of 36 boxes with 22 rows of benches on the floor; De Angelis, Pl. IV.

²⁹⁷ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol 73, "Rollo di Famiglia," no. 4, February 1740.

²⁹⁸ Chracas reports that the altar commission, previously thought to date from 1729, had not been completed until the painting was delivered in 1731; vol. 59, no. 2203, p. 5, September 15, 1731.



Figure 6.5: Domenico Gregorini, *Fireworks apparatus* (from engraving by Filippo Vasconi), Piazza della Cancelleria, Rome.

Gregorini seems to have been taken into the Cancelleria family for the single purpose of completing the *Confessione* in the nave of the cardinal's basilica (Figure 6.6).²⁹⁹ Early plans for the *Confessione* had been undertaken by Bernini, which explains in part its similarity to the crypt of Saint Peter at the crossing of nave and transept in the Vatican basilica, which stood within view of the tomb of Alexander VIII.³⁰⁰ Bernini had also constructed the *Confessione* or tomb for the remains of Santa Francesca Romana in Santa Maria Nova, c. 1638-1648.³⁰¹ The crypt at San Lorenzo had been excavated in the seventeenth century, but by 1700 there was little more than a circular grate in the

299 Schiavo, 1966, p. 104; Valtieri, pp. 46-58; Valesio, VI, p. 102, December 10, 1737; Kelly, p. 230; Moroni, XII, p. 71; L, p. 74.

300 Valtieri, p. 46; Schiavo, 1964, p. 104.

301 Reproduced in Lavin, I. (1980). The Confession of St. Francesco Romana in Santa Maria Nova, *Bernini and the Unity of the Visual Arts* (II, pp. 58-62, figs. 98, 99, 101). 2 vols., New York: Oxford University Press. For the origins of the subterranean *confessio*, see Hubala, E. (1965). *Roma sotterranea barocca: Unterirdische Andachtsstätten in Rom und ihre Bedeutung für die barocke Baukunst. Das Münster*, 18, 157-170. See also (1999). A. Pergolizzi (Ed.), *La Confessione nella basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano*, Milan: Silvana Editoriale.

pavement decorated with Barberini bees, a lamp within illuminating the space below. Ascenzio Latini had been paid for iron work on March 29, 1642, and Lorenzo Bartoloni for gilding;³⁰² Francesco Martinez added brass decorations only in 1737.³⁰³



Figure 6.6: Domenico Gregorini, *Confessione* (from painting by Giuseppe Valeriani), 1737, San Lorenzo in Damaso, Rome.

Described as a subterranean chapel by Chracas, the sunken oval confine spanned the width of the basilica's tribune (Appendix, doc. 10). An altar of *giallo antico* marble shaped like an urn was approached from above by a pair of grand staircases. Two Ionic columns

302 Valtieri, p. 46, n. 4.

303 Schiavo, 1972, p. 233.

flanked the altar at the center of the crypt and supported a broken architrave and flattened arch somewhat like a curved entablature.³⁰⁴ Ionic pilasters continued the support of the horizontal entablature of the interior of the ellipse. The altar was faced with a relief carving of the *Dead Christ with Mourning Angels* by Niccolò Menghini (1610-1665).³⁰⁵

The *Confessione*, as a crypt, housed the remains of Saint Hippolytus, the first bishop of Porto.³⁰⁶ It was consecrated on December 8, 1737.³⁰⁷ Ottoboni had been given the combined bishoprics of Porto and Santa Rufina in December of 1734.³⁰⁸ Alexander VIII had also held them when he was cardinal-bishop in 1687. Ottoboni commissioned Bartolommeo Pincellotti to carve a statue of Saint Hippolytus for a similar chapel at Porto, where the saint had been a bishop in the third century.³⁰⁹ This was a copy of the late third-century marble in the Vatican. Apparently the statue was now thought more appropriate for the church housing the saint's remains, as it was never sent to Porto and rests today near Sassi's Chapel of the Holy Sacrament.

Gregorini's *Confessione* no longer exists. It was destroyed when the church was deconsecrated and occupied by Napoleon's army during the French occupation of Rome. Napoleon's troops had converted the basilica into a stable in 1793. Twenty years later, it was made into a law court for the Imperial forces.³¹⁰ The nave was transformed in restorations in 1814 and 1868.³¹¹ The *Confessione* is known from written accounts and through Giuseppe Valeriani's painting preserved in the Palazzo Braschi.³¹² Valeriani's canvas once belonged to Ottoboni and is listed in the inventory of paintings assembled after his death in 1740; it was appraised at forty *scudi*.³¹³

³⁰⁴ Valtieri, pp. 46-47; Nicola Buti was paid for two columns on July 19, 1736; Schiavo, 1972, p. 233.

³⁰⁵ Schiavo, 1964, p. 103. An account of the acquisition of marble for the relief plaque was reported by Theubner, H. (1982). *Der Riario-Chor von S. Lorenzo*, *Il Brunelleschi*, 1, 81. Menghini designed a number of large *machine* in the 1640s; see Weil, pp. 219, 232.

³⁰⁶ The urn-shaped altar also held relics of Saints Ercolano, Taurino, and Giovanni Calibita; Valtieri, p. 47.

³⁰⁷ Blunt says 1730, p. 68.

³⁰⁸ Chracas, vol. 74, no. 2712, p. 11, December 18, 1734.

³⁰⁹ Kelly, p. 258, n. 125.

³¹⁰ For contemporary accounts of the conversion of churches during the Napoleonic occupation, see Duppà, R. (1799). *Journal of the most remarkable occurrences that took place in Rome upon the subversion of the ecclesiastical government in 1798*, London; Sala, A. (1980, publ. 1880-1882). *Diario Romano degli anni 1798-1799*. In G. Cugnoni (Ed.), *Scritti di Giuseppe Antonio Sala* (I, pp. 75, 181, II, p. 86, August 14, 1798; p. 161, September 19, 1798). Rome: Società alla Biblioteca Vallicelliana.

³¹¹ For the restoration of the nave of San Lorenzo in Damaso, see Kelly, p. 252, n. 80; Blunt, p. 68.

³¹² The painting has been studied and identified by Armando Schiavo; 1972, 228-234. See also, Incisa della Rocchetta, G. (1954). *La Veduta Settecentesca dell'interno di San Lorenzo in Damaso*. *Bollettino dei Musei Comunali di Roma*, I, no. 3-4, 35-39; Gramiccia (1981), p. 113; Olszewski, 2004, p. 6.

³¹³ For the inventory entry, consult: AS, R.C.A. 604, February 28, 1742, p. 224v, no. 473; "Altro de Quattro palmi e tre / in piedi rapp,te L'Altare Maggiore di S. Lorenzo in Damaso / Originale del Sig.re Valeriani / ora esistente come sopra;" and Olszewski, 2004, pp. 6, 126, no. 473, 244, 391, n. 34.

6.3 Ottoboni's Ephemeral Constructions

Machine, the grand, devotional constructions placed in church interiors for religious feasts represented one class of artistic ephemera. Other temporary architectural constructions included thrones, triumphal arches, catafalques, stage scenery, even small theaters, fireworks displays, and large scale sculptural and architectural ensembles. They were not always destroyed when a function ended, but as in the case of Juvarra's theater, usually dismantled so the materials could be salvaged. Also, they were sometimes saved with the intention of reuse at a later time. For example, Pietro da Cortona's apparatus for *Quarant'Ore* in 1633 in San Lorenzo in Damaso was reused annually for the next fifteen years.³¹⁴ The *baldacchino* and wainscoting decorating the apse of St. Peter for Alexander VIII's canonization of five saints in October 1690 was unchanged from Bernini's setting for canonizations there in 1669 (Figure 6.7).³¹⁵ Carlo Rainaldi's arch for the *possesso* of Clement X in 1670 was placed in storage and reused four years later.³¹⁶ As noted, the cost of the catafalque constructed by Matteo de Rossi for Alexander VIII's funeral in 1691 was significantly reduced when it was decided to make it of a collapsible assembly for future use.³¹⁷

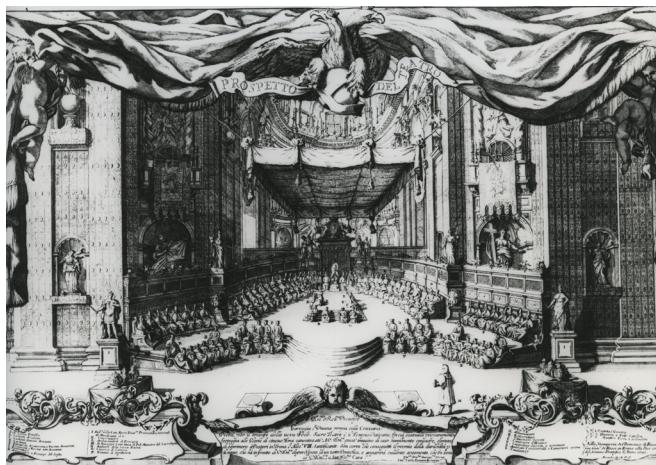


Figure 6.7: Anonym, *Canonization of Five Saints*, 1690, engraving, BAV, Vatican.

³¹⁴ Kelly, p. 226.

³¹⁵ These were for the sanctification of Peter of Alcantara and Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi. See Gramiccia (1981), pp. 258-259, no. 261, reproduced as fig. 262 (should be labeled as fig. 261). The decorations were apparently stored in Santa Maria Maggiore; Kerwin, W. (1981). Bernini's Baldachino Reconsidered. *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 19, 169.

³¹⁶ Montagu, p. 185.

³¹⁷ BAV, Cod. Ottob. 3362, "Avvisi," part 1, February 10, 1691, fasc. 7r. See discussion p. 8, n. 16.

The religious *machina* was a grand architectural apparatus often the size of a large building. It could be overwhelming as it filled the nave of a church, especially when combined with a manipulation of directed lighting, veiled in intensity for theatrical effect, sometimes in combination with rays of light in gilded stucco, and clouds with glories of clustered cherubs. Its purpose was to inform and educate the faithful, to reinforce belief, to persuade doubters, to enhance piety and devotion, to convey by splendor the Truth of the Church, and finally to rival the distractions of the pre-Lenten carnival. The apparatus often assumed a tabernacle enframement with a large painting at its center honoring a particular saint, biblical account, or important event in Church history. A major portion of the expense for the *machina* came from wax for the candles. The most common *machine*, certainly those Ottoboni most frequently commissioned, and often his grandest, were for the Devotion of Forty Hours. In this celebration, the sacred host was exposed on the altar for a vigil of three days (or forty hours overlapping a three day period).³¹⁸ The display in its splendor would present a devotional alternative to the profane carnival celebrations that followed.

Forty Hours became a popular devotion in Jesuit churches, although its first introduction into Rome had been by Saint Philip Neri in 1550. It was celebrated in San Lorenzo in Damaso for the first time on Christmas of 1551.³¹⁹ Pope Clement VIII established the liturgy for the devotion in an encyclical of 1592 as a form of universal prayer when the Church was threatened. Although he had simplified its ceremonies, it continued to be celebrated with ostentation.

The devotional *machina* took the form of a grand architectural ensemble, but it represented an architecture reduced to a temporary and exclusively religious function, one that had to incorporate non-architectural but essential elements such as paintings, tapestries, gilded figures, lamps and candles. It might be difficult to understand what appeal, as a fugitive art form, such projects could possibly hold for contemporary architects. These constructions had a far shorter life span than the most delicate pastel drawing. They neither suffered from their fragility as they were made of more durable materials than drawings, nor were they victims of the vicissitudes of time, for they were intended to be dismantled. They became in their diurnal splendor the butterflies of Baroque architecture.

One might expect such transitoriness to discourage any but the most desperate architects. Yet, what today is considered the most unfortunate aspect of devotional *machine*, their very impermanence, would have meant new opportunities for the young, hopeful architect as well as the established master. Their allure lay in their novelty; another feast day meant another subject, a new construction meant a new opportunity. The frequent demand for them challenged the artist's inventiveness.

³¹⁸ Weil, 219.

³¹⁹ Weil, 232, n. 41. Pinto says 1548; 1980, p. 292.

From the most basic point of view, their temporary nature gave artists work, and occasions to demonstrate their versatility.

None of Ottoboni's *machine*, not even the magnificent construction of Pellegrini in 1702, was able to match the scale of those in the seventeenth century. An *apparato* in Il Gesù in 1610 had 2,300 oil lamps and 500 candles, but it was also described as extraordinary.³²⁰ Nicolò Menghini's enormous *machina* in 1640 approached a ten story building at 130 x 85 x 50 *palmi* or 95'3" x 62'3" x 36'7", and filled the entire tribune of Il Gesù. In 1646, again for the Il Gesù, another Menghini construction required twenty carpenters, masons, painters, and laborers six weeks to complete. It was 133' x 67' x 50' and had 5,500 lamps which alone cost more than 800 *scudi*.

Ottoboni's first *machina* for his basilica of San Lorenzo was probably that of February 1690 which depicted the Dream of Jacob.³²¹ The commission, made to Felice del Lino, had a large proscenium arch and six colossal Solomonic columns. That in 1692, probably also by del Lino, was widely praised and visited by Pope Innocent XII, according to Campello, who reported that the *apparato* the following year was also impressive.³²² In the summer of 1693, Ottoboni celebrated the feast of Saint Lawrence with music and another large construction in his basilica.³²³ Ottoboni's court decorator, the painter Domenico Paradisi, was responsible for the apparatus for the Exposition of the Sacred Host in San Lorenzo in 1694.³²⁴ His efforts included the painted ornamentation of the altar, columns, the arms of Cardinal Ottoboni and two cornucopias. The construction had a steep staircase and the usual abundance of angels and lights.³²⁵

Already in 1693, the Roman guidebook *Mercurio Errante* had reported that Ottoboni went to great expenses every year for the Exposition on Fat Thursday of *carnevale*.³²⁶ He had little choice in the matter as his parish church of San Lorenzo was also one of

³²⁰ Weil, p. 219.

³²¹ Marescotti, vol. 788, p. 142, February 11, 1690. Weil, 242, no. 24.

³²² Campello, pp. 16-17, February 14, 1692; p. 32, January 29, 1693. Pascoli, page 220, reported that Giuseppe Passeri (1654-1714) had painted a sumptuous *machina* for Forty Hours in San Lorenzo in Damaso, but does not say when; see Contardi, B., "Passeri, Giuseppe," in *In Urbe*, p. 418.

³²³ Campello, p. 46, August 10, 1693.

³²⁴ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 30, fasc. 61, 1694.

³²⁵ Marescotti, vol. 788, pp. 492-492v, February 20, 1694. On Paradisi's skill as a *machinista*, see Pinto, 1980, pp. 306-307, 320, fig. 13. On at least one occasion he signed a receipt as "Domenico Paradisi Architetto;" BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 46, fasc. 47, May 2, 1695 for 71:14 *scudi*.

³²⁶ Rossini, pp. 70-71; "Questo Eminentissimo Cardinale fà ogni anno il Giovedi grasso di Carnevale una grandissima spesa per l'espositione del Santissimo Sacramento nella Chiesa di San Lorenzo, dentro del ditto Palazzo degne d'esser veduta da tutti, si per acquistare l'indulgenza concessa da Sommi Pontefici à detta Chiesa per tal congiuntura, che per vedere li ricchi ornamenti di Machine, di disegno di pitture, Gloria di Angeli, & una superbissima musica, & infinit lumi che rappresentano un Cielo stellato." From payments throughout the volumes of the Fondo Ottoboni costs for an apparatus ranged from 200 to 900 *scudi*. See also Montagu, p. 218, n. 69. for seventeenth century expenses.

the major Roman basilicas and a pilgrimage site, with papal indulgences earned by the faithful on their visits. Rossini's guidebook also explained what attracted the visitors, namely, the *machina*'s rich ornamentation, its well designed painting, the requisite glory of angels, superb music, and an infinity of lights representing a starry heaven.

Valesio had deemed Ottoboni's *machina* in San Lorenzo for the Exposition of the Sacrament in 1701 less than a success, but without identifying its designer.³²⁷ The devotional constructions in 1698, 1702 and 1706 were by Pellegrini (Table 4). San Martino had designed Ottoboni's *machina* for the Forty Hours celebration in 1697. Another grand *machina* displayed by Ottoboni in the piazza of the Cancelleria was visited by the pope about the time that Ottoboni had a triumphal arch erected in Albano to celebrate his restorations of the church and palace.³²⁸ Such outdoor ephemera had been popular from the early Renaissance, and assumed monumental proportions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Paradisi constructed an apparatus over 100 feet tall for a fireworks display to honor a royal Spanish wedding in 1721.³²⁹ Another erected by Nicola Salvi dwarfed the Spanish steps at more than 150 feet in height.³³⁰ This *machina* of 1728 was also constructed as a fireworks display.³³¹ An apparatus designed by Pier Leone Ghezzi honored the birth of the Dauphin in 1729. Panini's painting in the Louvre, and other versions such as that in Chicago, record Cardinal Polignac's enormous *machina* with fireworks at the Palazzo de Cupis which he shared with Ottoboni on the Piazza Navona.³³²

Table 4: Devotional Machine

Year	Subject (Architect/Painter):	Reference
1690	Dream of Jacob (Simone Felice del Lino);	Marescotti, vol. 788, p. 142; Weil pp. 242-243, 245, no. 24.
1692	Unknown; Campello says widely praised;	Campello, 1692, pp. 16-17.

³²⁷ Valesio, I, p. 288, February 4, 1701.

³²⁸ Campello, pp. 109-110, April 22, 1697; p. 112, April 26, 1697.

³²⁹ This is reproduced in Oechslin, W. (1989). Sebastian Conca Gemaltes 'Teatro Sacro': Die 'Piscina Probatica' in der Tribuna der Chiesa della SS. Annunziata des Ospedale S. Maria della Scala in Siena (1732). (1989). *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Federico Zeri* (p. 812, fig. 805). Venice. See also *Correspondance*, vol. 6, no. 2394, p. 105, November 25, 1721. Sebastian Conca's *machina* for fireworks on Piazza di Spagna in 1727 celebrated the birth of the Spanish Infanta. An engraving of the apparatus appears in Oechslin, p. 813, fig. 806.

³³⁰ Reproduced as Fig. 14 in Pinto, 1980, pp. 307, 320.

³³¹ So, too, was the *machina* assembled by Panini in Piazza Farnese in 1745 to celebrate the marriage of the Dauphin. An enormous structure, it was by design consumed by the very pyrotechnics that it displayed. It is preserved in an engraving and a painting in the Chrysler Museum; (1956). *Pictures from the Collection of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.* (pp. 37-38, Pl. 49). Portland, OR: Portland Art Museum.

³³² For a full description, see *Correspondance*, vol. 8, no. 3283, pp. 69-77, December 1, 1729.

Continued **Table 4:** *Devotional Machine*

Year	Subject (Architect/Painter):	Reference
1693	Unknown; Campello says impressive;	Campello, 1693, p. 32.
1694	Unknown (Paradisi);	BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 30, fasc. 61.
1697	Unknown (San Martino)	
1698	Unknown (Pellegrini)	
1700	Vision of Heavenly Jerusalem (Pellegrini);	Manfredi, 1991, p. 419; Weil 245, no. 26.
1701	Unknown; Valesio says mildly successful;	Valesio, I, p. 288.
1702	Saint Francis Xavier Baptising Chinese (Pellegrini);	Valesio, II, pp. 79-82 (doc. 1); Weil 245, no. 29.
1704	Purification of the Virgin (Rossi);	BAV, Ottob. Lat. 2732, p. 23v; Weil, 246, no. 31.
1705	Fall of Lucifer (?);	Valesio, III, p. 317.
1706	Pentecost (Pellegrini);	Valesio, III, pp. 555-556.
1707	Saints Paul and Barnaba Preaching to the Syrians (Michetti);	Valesio, III, pp. 773-774 (doc. 2).
1708	Saint Philip Neri at Mass (Michetti);	Valesio IV, pp. 31-32.
1709	Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence (Michetti);	Valesio, IV, pp. 233-234 (doc. 11).
1710	Saint Anthony of Padua (Michetti);	Valesio, IV, p. 387.
1711	Miracle of Saint Hyacinth in Kiev, 1241 (Rossi);	Valesio, IV, pp. 435-436.
1712	Santa Clara from Assisi Repulses Seracins with the Host (Rossi);	Weil, 246, no. 41.
1713	Saint Paul Praying on a Ship in a Storm (Rossi);	Weil, 246, no. 42.
1714	Unknown (Rossi);	Franz-Duhme, p. 251.
1715	Unknown (Rossi);	BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 70 (doc. 12).
1724	Unknown (Ferrari/Bicchierari);	Chracas, vol. 29, no. 1024, pp. 4-5.
1725	Unknown (Sassi/P. Balistrocchi);	Weil, 242-243, 247, no. 51; Kelly, pp. 309-311.
1726	Unknown (?);	Chracas, vol. 37, no. 1337, p. 7.
1727	Faith with a Heavenly Host (Mauri);	Chracas, vol. 42, no. 1513, p. 3.
1728	Triumph of Faith (Mauri);	Valesio, IV, pp. 905-906, 923-924; Weil 243, 247, no. 56 (docs. 13, 14).
	Holy Sepulchre (Mauri);	Chracas, vol. 45, no. 1660, pp. 8-9
	Unknown (?);	Valesio, IV, p. 982.
1733	Eucharist ini Glory (?);	Chracas, vol. 65, no. 2424, pp. 4-5.
1734	John the Baptist Identifying Christ (Oliverio/del Barba);	BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 93, fasc. 7; Chracas, vol. 71, no. 2589, pp. 8-10.
1735	Saint John Writing the Gospel (Oliverio/del Barba);	Valesio, 5, pp. 765-766; Chracas, vol. 75, no. 2738, pp. 4-7.

Continued **Table 4:** *Devotional Machine*

Year	Subject (Architect/Painter):	Reference
1736	Pope Sylvester Baptises Constantine (Oliverio/del Barba);	Valesio, 5, pp. 839-840; Chracas, vol. 79, no. 2891, pp. 3-4, 6-9.
1737	Joshua Halts the Sun (Ferrari/Bicchierari);	Weil 247, no. 68; Chracas, vol. 83, no. 3055, pp. 8-10.
1738	Unknown; Chracas reports a large audience;	Chracas, vol. 87, no. 3205, pp. 8-9.
1739	Holy Family (Ferrari);	Chracas, vol. 91, no. 3356, pp. 7-8.
1740	No machina;	Valesio, 6, p. 315.

Ottoboni's construction for 1704 was executed by his resident sculptor, Angelo de' Rossi, the same year that he completed the relief carving for the Vatican tomb of Alexander VIII. Rossi's *machina*, based on a program devised by Ottoboni, depicted the Presentation of Christ in the Temple with Mary and Saint Simeon.³³³ That for Forty Hours the following year elicited a visit from the pope.³³⁴ It represented Michael the Archangel and the Fall of Lucifer, a Roman subject associated with the Castel Sant'Angelo where a statue of the Archangel was once positioned. Pellegrini's *machina* of 1706 was important because it coincided with the interment of Pope Alexander VIII's cadaver in its new tomb niche in St. Peter. It depicted a Pentecost.³³⁵

Michetti had been asked to fabricate *machine* in 1707 and 1708 before his official residence in the court, and for the following two years as well (Appendix, docs. 2, 3, 11).³³⁶ The first *machina*, constructed during the years when Georg Friedrich Händel was in Rome and performed with Corelli, and at the Cancelleria with Domenico Scarlatti, depicted scenes of Saints Paul and Barnabas of Lystra and of Saint Philip

³³³ BAV, Ottob. Lat. 2732, p. 23v, February 2, 1704. A description of Rossi's *machina* is recorded in Franz-Duhme, pp. 233-237.

³³⁴ BAV, Ottob. Lat. 2733, p. 18v, January 31, 1705; "La Machina di quest'anno è riuscita delle più belle, che rappresentava la Caduta di Lucifero dal Cielo con S. Michael Arcangelo che teneva la Spada in Mano della Divina giustizia, e lo scudo imbracciato, in mezzo del quale traspirava L'Eucaristico Pane." Valesio, III, p. 317, February 19, 1705; "Si vidde questa mattina la machine fatta in SS. Lorenzo e Damaso dal Cardinale Ottoboni per l'esposizione del Venerabile. Rappresentava questa s. Michele arcangelo che discacciava dal paradise Lucifero con gli altri spiriti ribelli, tenendo con la destra il fulmine e con la sinistra reggeva lo scudo, in mezzodel quale adoravasi il Venerabile, et intorno al ditto scudo era scritto: 'Quis ut Deus?' Faceva bellissimo contrasto alla vista l'horrido dell'inferno sottoposto al chiaro e lucido del paradise. Sopra il frontespizio esteriore della machine v'era scritto a lettere traforate et illuminate: 'Armatura fortium'" p. 318, February 19, 1705.

³³⁵ Weil, 245-246, no. 34.

³³⁶ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 54, March 1707; Weil, 246, no. 35.

Neri levitating at Mass.³³⁷ Although neither of these architectural ensembles has survived, diary accounts, descriptions in pamphlets printed for the events, and occasional engravings have preserved some records of them. That for the Forty Hours celebrations of 1707 is described in a pamphlet preserved in Valesio's diary (Appendix, doc. 2). It indicates that its intent was to honor Pope Clement XI, whom Ottoboni had invited to the Exposition liturgy in San Lorenzo, and to highlight the importance to the Church of the apostles through their example. It was also meant for the edification of the faithful by the words, deeds, and miracles of the apostles. *Machina* were three-dimensional, multi-media, religious counterparts to emblem books, with a picture, an inscription, and a printed explanation (Figure 6.8).

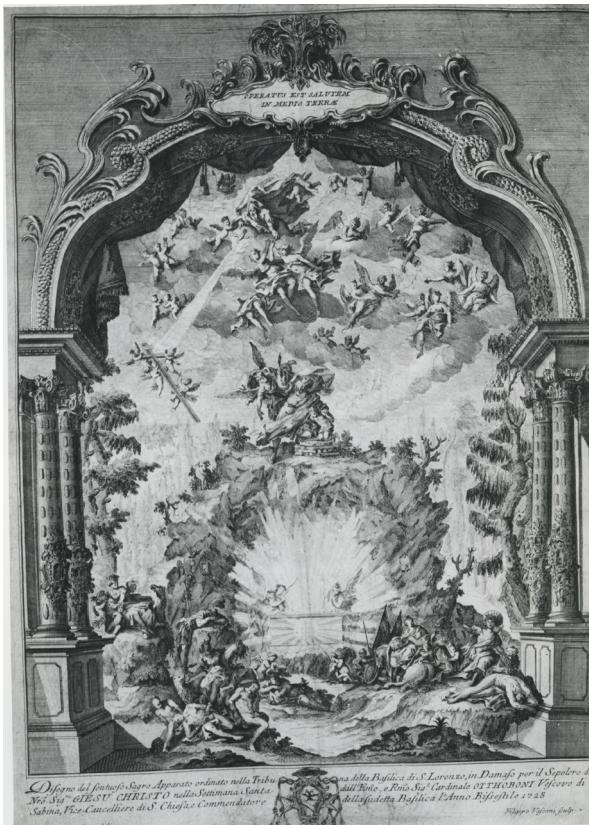


Figure 6.8: Alessandro Mauri, *Machina for Holy Week Celebrations*, 1728, engraving.

337 Weil, 246, nos. 15, 36.

In 1709 Michetti's apparatus showed the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence, one of the patron saints of Ottoboni's basilica and a patron of the Spanish (Appendix, doc. 11).³³⁸ Michetti employed seven painters, eleven carpenters and six masons. His *machina* for the following year depicted Saint Anthony of Padua and the Miracle of the Believing Mule, "AGNOVIT POSSESSOREM SUUM."³³⁹

The Ottoboni apparatus of 1711 was by Rossi, and again for each year until the sculptor's death in 1715.³⁴⁰ That for 1711 depicted Saint Giacinto performing a miracle at Kiev in his fight against heresy (Figure 6.9)³⁴¹ This may have been to honor the presence in Rome of the widow of the Polish King, Jan III Sobieski, who was the hero of the battle of Vienna against the Turks. The Queen of Poland was often honored by Ottoboni, whose collection included a marble portrait bust of her. She departed Rome in June 1714.³⁴²

Rossi's apparatus for 1713 based on Acts 27 represented Saint Paul on shipboard in a storm. When it is realized how elaborate his apparatus of 1715 had been, it is easy to understand why the aging Rossi had been unable to complete the carving of his marble allegories for the Ottoboni papal tomb and the second of his apostle figures for the nave of St. John Lateran.³⁴³ Rossi's agreement with his painters (Appendix, doc. 12) was made on behalf of Ottoboni and paid by the cardinal's *maestro di casa*, Lorenzo Pini. Paolo Gamba accepted the three-part payment of 110 *scudi* on behalf of the painters for the ornamentation of the *machina* which included scrolls with inscriptions, candelabras, and cornucopias in simulated gold and chiaroscuro as required. Gamba was paid at the beginning, middle and end of February.

Ottoboni's entry to the priesthood in mid-1724, and the completion of his great-uncle's tomb some months later during the Jubilee Year, gave him reason to commission a *machina* during the pre-Lenten carnival in 1725 that had deep personal significance (Figure 6.10).³⁴⁴ Constructed in the form of a sepulcher flanked by a pair of staircases decorated with painted torches, it had four engaged columns and a *baldacchino* for the ciborium containing the Sacred Host. The center display of a beautiful urn against a brilliant glory of lights alluded to the Ottoboni tomb, the dedication of which coincided with the display in San Lorenzo. Ottoboni chose Ludovico Rusconi

³³⁸ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 58, January 19, 1709; other lists of expenses of January 26 and February 16 were paid by Lorenzo Pini to Michetti; Valesio IV, p. 235, February 8, 1709; Weil, 246, no. 37.

³³⁹ Valesio, IV, p. 387, February 27, 1710; Weil, 246, no. 38.

³⁴⁰ Description of these *machine* by Rossi can be found in Franz-Duhme, pp. 238-252. See also, Valesio, IV, pp. 435-436 and Weil, 246, no. 40.

³⁴¹ Valesio, IV, pp. 434-436, February 13, 1711, and *Relazione del Celebre Miracolo di S. Giacinto*, Rome: Antonio de' Rossi, 1711.

³⁴² Viale Ferrero, p. 56, n. 3.

³⁴³ Rossi's *machina* is discussed at length by Franz-Duhme, pp. 124-129.

³⁴⁴ Valesio, IV, pp. 468-470, February 8, 1725; p. 488, March 29, 1725.

Sassi for this important commission, which Weil has characterized as extraordinary for its abstract qualities, the latter no doubt the result of its allegorical allusions to the Ottoboni pope's death.³⁴⁵

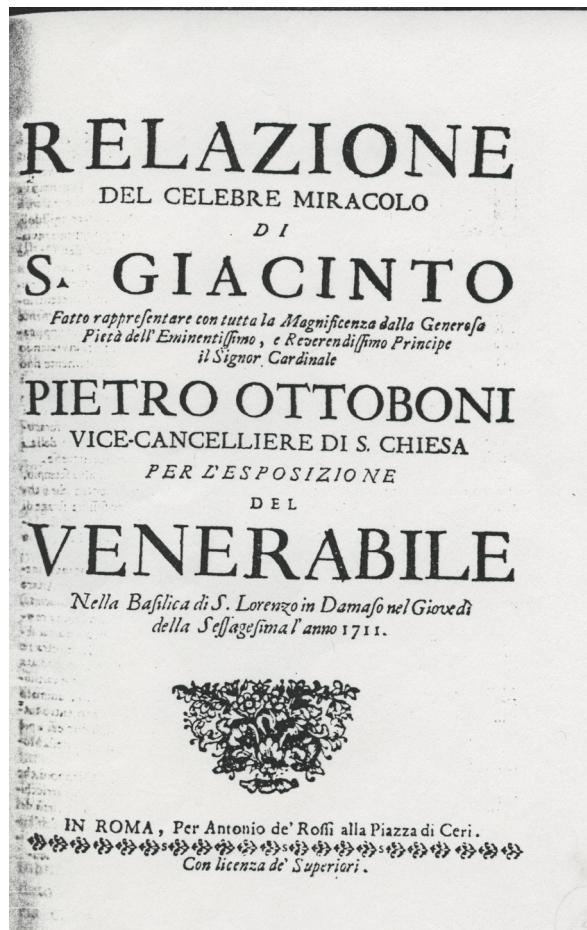


Figure 6.9: Title Page, (for description of *Machina* by Angelo de' Rossi for Forty Hours Devotion), 1711, engraving.

³⁴⁵ The apparatus is described at length in Kelly, pp. 309-311.

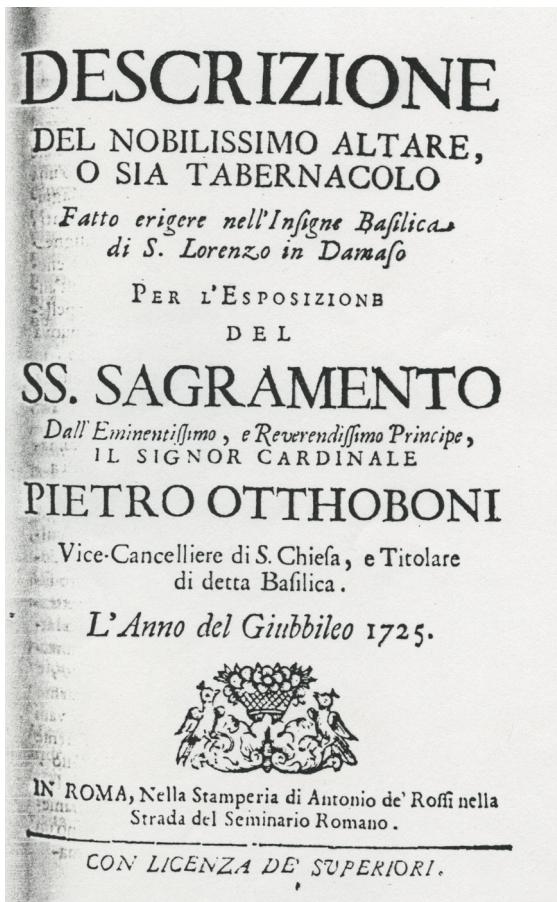


Figure 6.10: Title Page, (for description of *Machina* by Ludivico Sassi for Forty Hours Devotion), 1725, engraving.

Ottoboni's device the following year for the Exposition of the Sacrament continued these commissions not only without interruption, but as has been seen, on several occasions through the annual liturgical calendar. This is not to say that Ottoboni did not try on occasion to cut corners against the financial burdens created by these celebrations. His *machina* for 1726 drew prominent visitors but apparently was not sufficiently impressive to elicit an *ekphrasis* from the Roman diarists.³⁴⁶ That for the pre-Lenten celebrations of 1727 was a different matter.

³⁴⁶ Chracas, vol. 37, no. 1337, p. 7, March 2, 1726 refers to its many lights and the presence of cardinals, prelates, and civilian notables, but neither describes its structure nor mentions its subject or architect.

6.4 Alessandro Mauri

Alessandro Mauri's *machina* for the Lenten carnival of 1727 so impressed Ottoboni that the cardinal gave him a retainer for the following year (Appendix, doc. 13).³⁴⁷ The payment of February 7, 1728 to Mauri of 300 *scudi* represented a fourth and final payment indicating how splendid this construction must have been.³⁴⁸ Chracas's description of it confirms its magnificence as a triumph of Faith (Figure 6.11, Appendix, doc. 14). What the pope saw in his visit to San Lorenzo was Faith as an Amazon with a cross in her left hand and the Sacrament in her right below angels who held sacred trophies and supported a cloth canopy.³⁴⁹ Around her, saints and martyrs, confessors and virgins populated the four corners of the earth. The Virgin and God the Father in a glory of seraphs appeared in the open heavens. Richly decorated columns supported an architrave, frieze, and cornice. An attached cartouche contained the inscription, *Animoso firmat Fides*.

The contract for the commission reveals the degree of the patron's trust and of the artist's freedom and responsibilities in completing the project (Appendix, doc. 13). Ottoboni planned the pre-Lenten celebrations six months in advance. His contract with Mauri for the *machina* of 1728 was signed on August 12, 1727. In the document, Mauri promised to construct it at his own expense, to have it ready by Fat Thursday, and to have it conform with the design determined by the cardinal and elaborated on in the five points of the contract. Nowhere is reference made to the subject.

In the first paragraph of the contract, Mauri agreed to make the arch of the *machina*, and the relief and four columns indicated in the accompanying *disegno* (since lost) which were described as decorated with drawn glass simulating transparent jewels. The columns with their capitals and bases were to be in silvered stucco. Although the eighteenth century was the great age of silver, in this case it was also one of the colors of the Ottoboni arms. Within the arch, weeping trees sustained by iron filaments and covered with transparent canvas painted in strong colors were to be put on the ground of the four sectors of the world. Mauri was to have the arch intended for the Divine Glory and the quadrants of the globe supported by iron armatures covered with canvas.

The third paragraph indicated that Mauri's landscape, figures, and the heavens were to be made of transparent canvas; the fourth made explicit all the materials that he was to obtain including wood, canvas, iron, glass, colors, etc. The final stipulation

³⁴⁷ The *machina* of 1727 depicted the Temple of Jerusalem; Chracas, vol. 42, no. 1513, p. 3, April 19, 1727; BAV, Comp. Ottob. Vol. 84, no. 68, August 12, 1727; no. 90, October 13, 1727; vol. 87, no. 11, 1728; vol. 109, p. 249, August 12, 1727, of 300 *scudi*. BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 109, fasc. 68, 94, and 249, August 12, 1727, for 300 *scudi* to "Sig. Alessandro Mauri p(er) la Machina da farsi...nel promiso Carnevale del anno 1728;" vol. 41, fasc. 260, December 14, 1727; vol. 82, fasc. 11, February 7, 1728.

³⁴⁸ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 87, fasc. 11, February 7, 1728, "la quarta et ultima paga del contratto."

³⁴⁹ Chracas, vol. 45, no. 1642, p. 2, February 14, 1728; Valesio, IV, pp. 905-907, February 5, 1728.

was that Mauri had to make and position the oil lamps and thirty globes of wax (candle lamps) around the site for the Holy Sacrament.

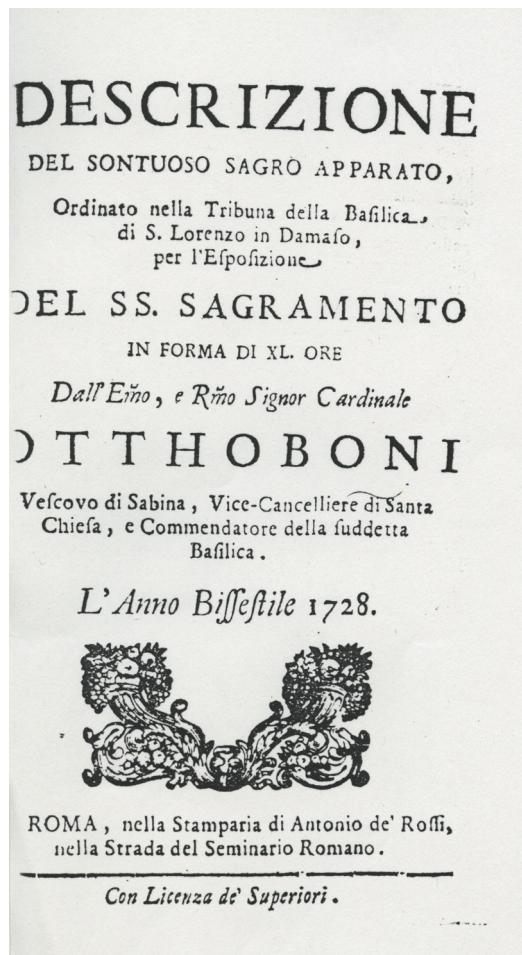


Figure 6.11: Title Page, (for description of *Machina* by Alessandro Mauri for Forty Hours Devotion), 1728, engraving.

Finally, Ottoboni promised to pay Mauri 1,200 *scudi* in four equal payments: on the signing of the agreement in August, the following October, in December, and when the *machina* was delivered. Receipts for four payments of 300 *scudi* each can be found in the Ottoboni archives.

A second apparatus by Mauri, that for the Holy Week celebrations of 1728, proved to be equally as majestic (see Figures 6.8, 6.12). If one assumes it to have approached the proportions of Pellegrini's *machina* of 1702, it would have filled the nave of the

basilica, its paired columns of the composite order supporting an arch sprung from brackets within which God the Father appeared on a bank of clouds laden with angels as he directed a swarm of cherubs who displayed the cross. On a hillock below, an angel interrupts Abraham's attempt to sacrifice Isaac, as farther down figures collapse before the divine brilliance emanating from the Holy Sepulchre.³⁵⁰

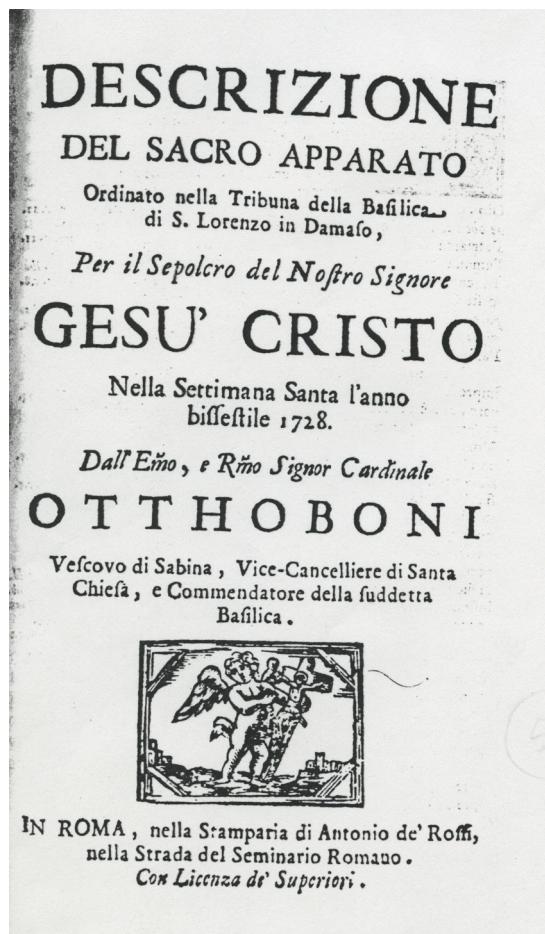


Figure 6.12: *Title Page*, (for description of *Machina* for Holy Week Celebrations), 1728, engraving.

350 Chracas, vol. 45, no. 1660, pp. 8-9, March 27, 1728.

Ottoboni did not repeat the extravagance for the feast of the Assumption, for Valesio reported that his celebration lacked the usual magnificence.³⁵¹ He had already economized on the Holy Week display, as Valesio noted that the cardinal had used a large portion of the past *Quarant'Ore machina* for construction of the beautiful sepulcher which was part of the Lenten apparatus.³⁵²

Ottoboni's construction for the Forty Hours of 1733 took an unusual departure in assuming the form of an impressive throne to contain the Holy Sacrament for adoration by the faithful (Figure 6.13).³⁵³ That for the following year introduced a new architect into the official family of the court.



Figure 6.13: Title Page, (for description of *Machina* for Forty Hours Devotion), 1733, engraving.

³⁵¹ Valesio, IV, p. 982, August 15, 1728. He observed in the same passage that the Borghese *machina* was outstanding, adding the consideration of competitive rivalry.

³⁵² Valesio, IV, p. 925, March 25, 1728.

³⁵³ Chracas, vol. 65, no. 2424, pp. 4-5, February 14, 1733; Weil, 247, no. 61.

6.5 G.B. Oliverio

Ottoboni displayed another elaborate *machina* for the Exposition of the Holy Sacrament in his basilica in March of 1734.³⁵⁴ This was the responsibility of Giovanni Battista Oliverio who would soon enter the palace rolls, preceding Gregorini by a few months.³⁵⁵ The idea for the ensemble came from the cardinal and included Ginesio del Barba's painting of *Saint John the Baptist in the Desert* at the center of the display. In the painting the Baptist identifies Christ for the fisherman Andrew. Christ was placed below the eucharist with a glory of angels and the mystic lamb below them with *ECCE AGNUS DEI* inscribed on a scroll.

The team of Oliverio and del Barba was chosen again the following year to erect the apparatus for the days of carnival that February (Figure 6.14).³⁵⁶ Chracas commented on the magnificence of the construction which was placed at the top of a staircase covered with tapestries. Spiral columns circled with leaves of gold supported the arrangement. An arch and grand cupola were part of the apparatus. Saint John the Evangelist, seated at a table and writing in an open book, was implored by seven bishops of Asia to write his gospels to confound heresy. The saint pointed with his left hand to the words of his gospel, “*LUX IN TENEBRIS LUCET*,” and to the exposed sacrament above as if to justify this brilliant display of light; John 1:5.

Oliverio was still being paid for the project as late as July in statements that identified him as “Gio. Batta Oliveri Pittore et Ingegniere.”³⁵⁷ The second designation of “Ingegnere” for so many of Ottoboni’s architects indicated that they not only designed their structures, but were also capable of assembling them and devising their mechanical needs. Another payment in 1736 of a two-page *conto* to, “Gio. Batt. Oliverio Pitore,” was for work on three lunettes, pilasters, windows, a cornice, and for gesso in a *Cappella* in San Lorenzo.³⁵⁸ This may have been the new chapel of the Holy Sacrament constructed by Sassi. An additional bill of 51.92 *scudi* in May identifies its charge as for “i pitture fatte p(er) il Sepolcra” in San Lorenzo.³⁵⁹ The new altar, with paintings by Trevisani’s pupil, Andrea Casali, was dedicated on August 5th, as has been noted.

³⁵⁴ Chracas, vol. 71, no. 2589, pp. 8-10, March 6, 1734; Weil, 247, no. 63. See Comp. Ottob., vol. 93, fasc. 7, February 3 – March 25, 1734 for payments of 360 *scudi*.

³⁵⁵ Oliverio had entered Ottoboni’s rolls where he is listed as, “Gio. Battista Oliverio Ingegnere e Mechanista;” BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 92, “Rollo di Famiglia,” July 1735. Oliverio worked at the cathedral in Velletri; see BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 73, fasc. 27, 1739; vol. 94, fasc. 54, July 21, 1735; vol. 95, p. 108, fasc. 2, May 7, 1736, fasc. 6, February 17, 1736 and p. 158. See also Da Gai, E. “Oliverio Giovanni Battista,” in *In Urbe*, p. 411.

³⁵⁶ Chracas, vol. 75, no. 2738, pp. 4-7, February 7, 1735; Weil, 247, no. 65.

³⁵⁷ See BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 94, fasc. 54, July 21, 1735 for a payment of 436.15 *scudi*.

³⁵⁸ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 95, p. 158, 1736.

³⁵⁹ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 95, fasc. 2, p. 108, May 7, 1736.

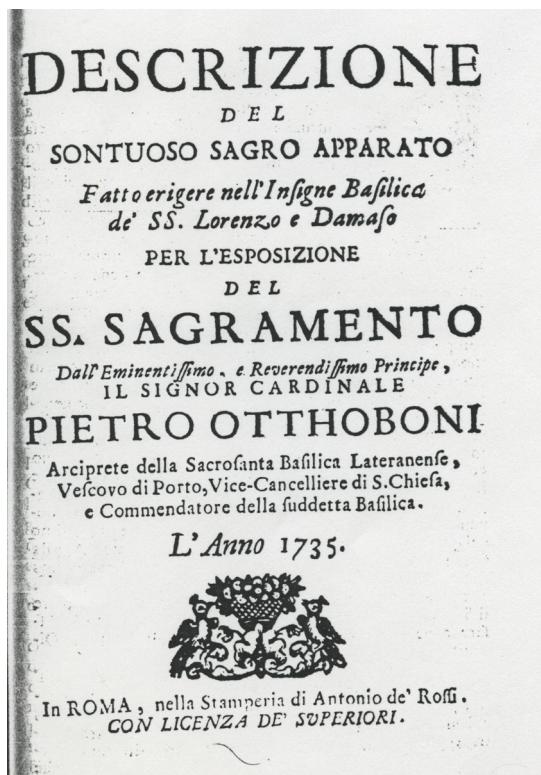


Figure 6.14: Title Page, (for description of *Machina* by G.B. Oliverio for Forty Hours Devotion), 1735, engraving.

Oliverio had also been architect for Ottoboni's *machina* in February of 1736 for the annual pre-Lenten devotions in San Lorenzo (Figure 6.15). This was an ensemble of gold and silver vases, military trophies, and rich tapestries, suitably impressive to have been recorded by both of Rome's prominent diarists.³⁶⁰ Ginesio del Barba's painting of a grand temple of twelve spiral columns in lapis lazuli, and a giant cupola with Pope Sylvester baptizing the Emperor Constantine was placed at its center. Clearly, the location was a reconstruction of the ancient Lateran baptistery. There was also an altar with painted figures of Saint John the Baptist and Saint John the Evangelist, who were figures of special devotion for Ottoboni as archpriest of St. John Lateran, and which continued the themes of the previous two years.

³⁶⁰ Chracas, vol. 79, no. 2891, pp. 3-4, 6-9, February 11, 1736; Valesio, V, pp. 839-840; Weil, 247, no. 67. For a payment to Oliverio, see BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 95, fasc. 6, February 17, 1736.



Figure 6.15: Title Page, (for description of *Machina* by G.B. Oliverio for Forty Hours Devotion), 1736, engraving.

In the 1730s, Ottoboni's resident painter, Trevisani, and an assistant had painted cartoons for a *Baptism of Constantine by Pope Sylvester*.³⁶¹ Barba may have been the assistant although he is not recorded as a pupil of Trevisani. Oliverio had also worked for Ottoboni on a second chapel at the cardinal's seat in Velletri. This, too, was a chapel of the Holy Sacrament in the city's cathedral; Oliverio was overseer, responsible for canvas, colors, and day's wages for painters.³⁶² His name was still listed in the palace rolls when Ottoboni died in February of 1740.³⁶³

The last decade of Ottoboni's life had been a period of some of his most ambitious patronage. Several projects rivaled that of his great-uncle's tomb both in scale and

³⁶¹ DiFederico, pp. 66-68.

³⁶² BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol 73, fasc. 27, 1739 for 51.07 scudi; "Conto di spese, di Tela imprimita, colori, Pitori, e intaglio del Baldachino per la Capela del SS. Sacramento nella Chiesa Catedrale di Velletri. Fatto per ordine Dell'Em.mo e Rev.mo Sig. Cardinale Pietro Ottoboni, di Gio. Batta Oliverio Ing.e e Pitore di S. E.a Padrone. L'Anno 1739.

³⁶³ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 73, no. 4, February 1740, as "Ingegniere, e Machista."

expense. In addition to *machine*, he commissioned a suite of more than fifteen tapestries from Pietro Ferloni who directed the tapestry works that Clement XI had established at Ripa Grande.³⁶⁴ One or more were delivered each year at a total expense of more than 6,000 *scudi*, and may have been the tapestries included in Oliverio's *machine* of 1735 and 1736.

Architecture is generally thought of as a permanent, immovable art form, but Ottoboni commissioned a splendid construction in black with gold trim inspired by Venetian models. It was also mobile. This was his Bucentar recalling the grand ceremonial ships of his native Venice.³⁶⁵ Nothing is known of the size of this *piotta* outfitted with oars and built at Ripa Grande in 1737. It reflected Ottoboni's nostalgia for his native Venice, but more importantly, it served a practical purpose for the aging cardinal who used it frequently to travel down the Tiber to his new bishopric of Porto, sometimes accompanied by members of his family, and in 1737 and 1738 to participate in Easter celebrations. It was dedicated to the Virgin with the words, *STELLA MARIS*, added in gold lettering, which also represented an Ottoboni family motto.

In 1739, the music-loving cardinal commissioned Giovanni Costanzi to sing fifty Psalms over a period of weeks until the cycle was completed.³⁶⁶ Ottoboni paid his *maestro di cappelli* 564 *scudi* for the ambitious recital which met every Wednesday evening for twelve weeks, with four or five of the psalms sung each week.³⁶⁷ The psalms had been assembled years before as vernacular poems composed and set to music by two Venetians and published in eight volumes in 1724 and 1725.³⁶⁸ Ottoboni opened the performances to many nobles and dignitaries including James III, the pretender to the English throne.³⁶⁹

Francesco Ferrari was Ottoboni's architect for Forty Hours devotions in February 1739.³⁷⁰ He worked with the painter Antonio Bichierari whose *Holy Family* painting was part of the display.³⁷¹ Ferrari had designed a *machina* for Ottoboni fifteen years before,

³⁶⁴ For more on Ottoboni's tapestries, see Olszewski, 1983; Standen, 1982, 147-164; 1985, II, pp. 776-785.

³⁶⁵ Valesio, VI, p. 32, March 30, 1737; Chracas, vol. 84, no. 3079, p. 7, April 27, 1737.

³⁶⁶ Chracas, vol. 84, no. 3070, April 6, 1737; vol. 88, no. 3229, p. 5, April 12, 1738; Valesio, VI, p. 35, April 13, 1737.

³⁶⁷ Ottoboni paid Costanzi 564 *scudi* for the recital of the psalms which took twelve evenings: BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 99, fasc. 55, September 23, 1739. The highly popular event was widely publicized; Valesio, VI, p. 243, July 8, 1739; Correspondance, IX, no. 4191, p. 378, May 1, 1739.

³⁶⁸ Correspondance, IX, no. 4191, p. 378, May 1, 1739; Valesio, VI, p. 243, July 8, 1739; p. 255, August 20, 1739; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 99, fasc. 55, September 23, 1739.

³⁶⁹ Talbot, M. Marcello, Benedetto. in Sadie, XI, p. 649. See also, Chracas, vol. 93, no. 3425, pp. 12-14, July 18, 1739; no. 3456, p. 16, September 26, 1739.

³⁷⁰ Chracas, vol. 91, no. 3356, pp. 7-8, February 7, 1739.

³⁷¹ For more on Ferrari, see Thieme and Becker, XI, p. 449; Weil, 246, nos. 46, 47; Bevilacqua, M. Ferrari Francesco. In *In Urbe*, p. 364. Bevilacqua makes no mention of Ferrari's engagement with Ottoboni.

already collaborating with the painter Bichierari.³⁷² The earliest reference to Ferrari occurred in 1703 when he won a prize in the Concorso Clementino. He was enrolled in the Academy of St. Luke in July 1721 as an architect and painter, and although he served Ottoboni during the last few years of the cardinal's life, he never entered the palace rolls. He served as architect to the Marchese Giovanni Filippo De Angelis, and to the Marchese Emilio Cavaliere from 1721 to 1744.³⁷³ His work for Ottoboni came just after his completion of the renovation of St. Gregory the Great in 1737, a project initiated by Clement XI. Chracas described Ferrari's *machina* for Holy Week of 1737 as representing the overwhelming victories of Joshua, whose indomitable power over the enemies of the Israelites was indicated by his command to the sun to stand still.³⁷⁴ The extraordinary number of candles in the display alluded to the sun frozen in place in a presentation that greatly pleased the dozen cardinals in attendance.³⁷⁵ Gregorini still remained in the palace rolls as the cardinal's architect, as did Oliverio.³⁷⁶ Ottoboni's uncle, Marco, and his daughter had both married members of the Buoncompagni family, and Gregorini continued his association with this family after Ottoboni's death by designing the tomb of Maria Eleonora Buoncompagni Ludovisi in Santa Maria del Popolo in 1749.

Valesio's diary entry of February 25, 1740 mentioned that Ottoboni, stricken by fever, had left the conclave that had assembled to elect a successor to Clement XII. Three days later he was dead. Valesio's entry also noted that the Forty Hours' celebrations that month were conducted "senza *machina*."³⁷⁷

³⁷² This was for the Forty Hours devotions in San Lorenzo in 1724. See Chracas, vol. 29, no. 1024, pp. 4-5, February 26, 1724; no. 1027, pp. 3-4, March 4, 1724.

³⁷³ Ferrari undertook the reconstruction of Cavaliere's palace in the 1720s. He obtained various chapel commissions and work on church and palace renovations throughout his career. From 1730 to 1735 he restored the palace of the Marchese Clemente Spada Veralli in piazza Colonna.

³⁷⁴ Joshua 10. Chracas, vol. 83, no. 3055, pp. 8-10, March 2, 1737. Valesio reports that there was no *machina* for the pre-Lenten festivities in 1737, only candles and simulated clouds; Valesio, VI, p. 24, February 28, 1737.

³⁷⁵ The following year's *apparato* received a large audience of notables, but Chracas does not identify the artists; Chracas, vol. 87, no. 3205, pp. 8-9, February 15, 1738.

³⁷⁶ BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 73, "Rollo di Famiglia," fasc. 2, February 1740; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 73, "Rollo di Famiglia," fasc. 4, February 1740.

³⁷⁷ Valesio, VI, p. 315, February 25, 1740.